

genius of Franklin Delano Roosevelt was that he saw that, and the genius of successive Congresses was that they enhanced the program. However, the last time it was enhanced, Richard Nixon was President of the United States in 1971.

This also is, for Americans, a lifeline because of what it does. Speaker SMITH was just in the chair before, and I was explaining that in his district, he has over 150,000 recipients, Mr. Speaker. Those recipients are broken down in several different ways: Retirees, over 100,000; spouses, over 8,000; widows, 8,000; 14,000 disabled people in Speaker SMITH's district, but they haven't received an increase from the United States Congress since 1971.

If you disagree with it—if you disagree that people don't deserve this, to have their Social Security updated, brought into the modern times that we live in, then vote against it, but for God's sake, for the more than 70 million Americans who rely on this and need this, it is long overdue for a vote. Don't you think so?

SENDING A CLEAR MESSAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a vital piece of legislation, the Laken Riley Act.

On February 22, 2024, Laken Riley, a 22-year-old Augusta University nursing student was murdered by an illegal Venezuelan migrant while she was jogging in Athens, Georgia.

Prior to the attack on Laken, her killer illegally entered the United States and was apprehended and released at the border. The perpetrator was also previously arrested by both Federal and State officials in multiple jurisdictions, and each time released due to certain States' soft-on-crime policies and the failures of the Biden-Harris administration to protect our southern border.

The Laken Riley Act is straightforward in its purpose, safeguarding the safety and security of our neighborhoods from the threat posed by criminal, illegal aliens who disregard our laws and endanger our citizens. It sends a clear message that we will no longer tolerate leniency when it comes to those who commit theft, burglary, larceny, shoplifting, or other serious crimes.

This bill also empowers States to hold future administrations accountable. For too long, radical far-left policies weakened immigration enforcement and prioritized open borders over the safety of American families.

By providing States with legal standing to challenge Federal officials who fail to enforce immigration laws, we ensure that no administration, present or future, can turn a blind eye to the dangers posed by criminal, illegal aliens.

Recently, January 10 would have been Laken Riley's 23rd birthday. This legislation isn't just another bill. It is a promise to address the real challenges and commitment to creating a safer, more equitable future for all. This is our chance to honor Laken Riley's legacy by building something lasting and meaningful.

It is a chance to prove that we can rise above partisanship and come together to solve real problems for real people. This will protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of every American, restore trust in our immigration system, uphold the rule of law, and ensure that every community in this country is safe and secure. It is time to put the safety and security of the American people first.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this vital legislation and to return it to the Senate.

WILDFIRE WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor those fighting the deadly wildfires that are destroying our homes, businesses, and taking lives across southern California. In the face of this natural disaster, I thank our brave first responders who are on the front lines fighting one of the worst fires in California history.

I am also proud of our local Orange County firefighters that are helping our neighbors in Los Angeles. I am happy to say that we are not alone. I am grateful for firefighters from across the country, neighboring States, as well as our neighboring countries, Canada and Mexico, who have also come to help us fight these fires.

Moments like this remind us that strength is through unity and helping each other out. Of course, that includes almost 750 incarcerated individuals who are stepping up and acting as firefighters on the front lines.

□ 1230

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the immigrant community in the area who are offering free food to the first responders and collecting donations for the families in need.

From firefighters to food vendors, friends, and local neighbors, all coming together in this time of tragedy, that is what community is all about. That is what this Nation is all about.

RECOGNIZING LESTONNAC FREE CLINIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EDWARD GERBER

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of my very good friend, Ed Gerber, the executive director of the Lestonnac Free Clinic in Orange.

Ed graduated from the University of Texas after 4 years in the military. Since then, he has dedicated his time as an executive director at the Lestonnac Free Clinic. His priority is free medical and dental services to the

uninsured and low-income families across southern California.

Under his leadership, Lestonnac Free Clinic has expanded to 13 satellite clinics and 2 mobile medical vehicles. He pioneered the specialty care program to help low-income families access specialty medical care.

We love Ed. We want him to stay healthy. We need him, and we thank him for his very, very good work in our community.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BICE) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

On these days after the long-sought ceasefire in Israel and Gaza, we pray in thanks to You, Lord Almighty, that as You promised, You have given freedom to the captives. You have broken the shackles of their confinement, that the Israeli and Palestinian men, women, and children, soldiers and civilians, sick and infirmed, may be returned to their homelands and to the embrace of their loved ones.

Bind up the brokenhearted, those whose arms remain empty, grieving the death of the ones who did not live to see this day. Bind up the wounds of the hostages released as they suffer injury of mind and body that has penetrated their very souls.

In these next weeks, Sovereign God, intercede and effect the end of the region's warfare. Abolish the bow and the sword, put an end to the gunfire and bombardment, silence the battle that rages, and remove from the land all desire for vengeance.

Clear the way for safe troop withdrawal and swift delivery of humanitarian aid. May all, under Your watchful eye, soon lie down in safety. In You, may we find everlasting peace, and in Your name, may we lift up our prayers. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MOORE of Utah led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 21, 2025.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 21, 2025, at 10:29 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 5.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Clerk.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces, without objection, the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to clause 11 of rule X, clause 11 of rule I, the order of the House of January 3, 2025, and notwithstanding the requirement clause 11(a)(4)(A) of rule X, of the following Members of the House to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

Mr. HIMES, Connecticut
Mr. CARSON, Indiana
Mr. CASTRO, Texas
Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Illinois
Mr. CROW, Colorado
Mr. BERA, California
Ms. PLASKETT, Virgin Islands
Mr. GOTTHEIMER, New Jersey
Mr. GOMEZ, California
Ms. HOULAHAN, Pennsylvania
Mr. QUIGLEY, Illinois

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

HERSHEL "WOODY" WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MONUMENT LOCATION ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass

the bill (H.R. 186) to authorize the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation to establish a commemorative work on the National Mall to honor the extraordinary acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 186

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Hershel 'Woody' Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Congress in 2021 unanimously passed, and the President signed, Public Law 117-80 (40 U.S.C. 8903 note), which authorized the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation to establish on Federal land in the District of Columbia a commemorative work to honor the acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients.

(2) The Medal of Honor was established by President Abraham Lincoln and first awarded 160 years ago on March 25, 1863, and is part of Lincoln's lasting and living legacy.

(3) In 1991, during the administration of President George H.W. Bush, this legacy was extended further when National Medal of Honor Day was established as March 25th of each year.

(4) The Medal of Honor is awarded to all branches of the United States Armed Forces as our nation's highest recognition for valor in combat.

(5) The number of living Medal of Honor recipients has been steadily declining, making it even more crucial to honor and recognize their heroic sacrifices and inspire future generations.

(6) Hershel "Woody" Williams, the last World War II Medal of Honor recipient, passed away in 2022 and laid in honor at the United States Capitol.

(7) The Medal of Honor represents the very best of our Nation—ordinary citizens, who took extraordinary action above and beyond the call of duty and became heroes of our Republic.

(8) These examples inspire all citizens and ignite within us the very spirit of America.

(9) The Medal of Honor rises to the level of supreme national and historical importance necessary to warrant representation on the National Mall.

(10) Locating the National Medal of Honor Monument in close proximity to the Lincoln Memorial within the Reserve would be a respectful extension of his enduring legacy and recognition of what ordinary people can accomplish when working for the greater good.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MONUMENT LOCATION.

(a) SITE.—Notwithstanding section 8908(c) of title 40, United States Code, the commemorative work authorized by section 1(a) of Public Law 117-80 (40 U.S.C. 8903 note) shall be located within the Reserve (as defined in section 8902(a) of title 40, United States Code).

(b) APPLICABILITY OF COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.—Except as provided in subsection (a), chapter 89 of title 40, United States Code (commonly known as the "Commemorative Works Act"), shall apply to the commemorative work.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gen-

tleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 186, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, as we approach the 250th celebration of our Nation next year, there is perhaps no greater way to celebrate our history than passing H.R. 186, which honors the valor and sacrifice of some of our Nation's bravest heroes, Medal of Honor recipients.

Madam Speaker, 162 years ago, President Abraham Lincoln awarded the first Medal of Honor in the midst of the Civil War. It remains our Nation's highest honor awarded to members of the Armed Forces and is bestowed sparingly to only those who have demonstrated the highest acts of valor. Less than 70 Medal of Honor recipients are alive today out of the more than 3,500 medals that have been awarded.

As the highest and most prestigious military decoration in the United States, the Medal of Honor symbolizes extraordinary acts of bravery, selflessness, and sacrifice beyond the call of duty.

□ 1415

Madam Speaker, by recognizing these remarkable individuals, the Medal of Honor inspires a sense of national pride, honors the memory of fallen heroes, and motivates future generations to embody the values of courage and honor.

The Medal of Honor continues to instill a profound sense of respect and gratitude for the sacrifices made in the defense of freedom and justice.

Congressman MOORE's bipartisan bill, the Hershel "Woody" Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act, will ensure that the monument honoring these brave heroes can be placed on what is known as the Reserve but is commonly referred to as "The National Mall" here in Washington, D.C.

A monument honoring our most exceptional citizens should be placed in an equally exceptional location. According to National Park Service data, The National Mall receives upward of 25 million visitors each year. The monuments and memorials located on The National Mall are the centerpiece of this history, and it is appropriate to include a new monument honoring veterans who have displayed the most courageous acts of valor recognized by our country.